

Using *They Say, I Say* to Draft an Introduction

It can be difficult to understand how to respond to other people's arguments. *They Say, I Say* sets up a template to illustrate "moves" (key transitional phrases and terms) to help you summarize someone else's claims, respond to their claims, and, ultimately, use their claims to set up your own argument.

In the introduction to "*They Say / I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*," Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein provide templates designed to _____. Specifically, Graff and Birkenstein argue that the types of writing templates they offer _____. As the authors themselves put it, "_____." Although some people believe _____, Graff and Birkenstein insist that _____. In sum, then, their view is that _____.

I [agree, disagree, have mixed feelings]. In my view, the types of templates that the authors recommend _____. In addition, _____. Some might object, of course, on the grounds that _____. Yet I would argue that _____. Overall, then, I believe _____--an important point to make given _____.

Consider the introduction below. The bolded words represent the "moves" that the author makes as she introduces one viewpoint, responds to the viewpoint, and presents her argument.

The term "vegetarian" tends to be synonymous with "tree-hugger" in **many people's minds**. **They see** vegetarianism as a cult that brainwashes its followers into eliminating an essential part of their daily diets for an abstract goal of "animal **welfare**." **However**, few vegetarians choose their lifestyle just to follow the **crowd**. **On the contrary**, many of these supposedly brainwashed people are actually independent thinkers, concerned citizens, and compassionate human **beings**. **For the truth is that** there are very good reasons for giving up meat. Perhaps the best reasons are to improve the environment, to encourage humane treatment of livestock, or to enhance one's own **health**. **In this essay, then, I will closely examine** a vegetarian diet as compared to a meat-eater's diet **to show** that vegetarianism is clearly the better option for sustaining the Earth and all its **inhabitants**.

Remember that you can use this template when discussing more than one source or viewpoint. The common viewpoint, for example, could be a certain approach or types of approaches advocated by scholars. The new viewpoint, then, could represent something left out of scholarship or a particular approach that you feel deserves more attention.

Excerpted from *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. Pp. 14-15.

Sandquist, Amy L. 12/17/2013 10:14 AM

Comment [1]: Introduces common viewpoint on an issue.

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Comment [2]: Explains common viewpoint.

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Comment [3]: Uses a transition word to show a shift away from common viewpoint.

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Comment [4]: Presents new viewpoint that opposes the one initially presented.

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Comment [5]: Presents support for the new viewpoint.

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Comment [6]: Thesis statement/argument that shows relationship between the common viewpoint and the new viewpoint. Thesis statement **chooses** a side.